

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

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APPROVED BY EA:RHMILLER

EA/P:MSMITH

AID/L:MHUNTINGTON

S/PRS:RFUNSETH

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R 081613Z SEP 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:EAID, EFIN, LA

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON NAM NGUM

MANILA FOR USADB

1. FOLLOWING IS CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE WE INTEND TO
USE ON AN "IF ASKED" BASIS IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS ABOUT
THE WITHDRAWAL OF OUR PARTICIPATION IN NAM NGUM.

2. QUESTION: CAN YOU COMMENT ON THE REPORTED US WITH-
DRAWAL OF ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE NAM NGUM II DAM PROJECT
IN LAOS?

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ANSWER: WE HAVE INFORMED THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK AND

OTHER PARTICIPANTS THAT THE US HAS DECIDED TO WITHDRAW THE FIVE MILLION DOLLAR DEVELOPMENT LOAN INCLUDED IN OUR 1974 BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH THE LAO GOVERNMENT AS OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE NAM NGUM II DAM PROJECT IN LAOS.

QUESTION: DOES THIS MEAN THE PROJECT WILL BE ABANDONED?

ANSWER: WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT THE PROJECT WILL BE ABANDONED. THERE ARE EIGHT OTHER PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE JAPANESE, WEST GERMANS AND CANADIANS. THE

TOTAL COST OF THIS PHASE OF THE PROJECT WAS ORIGINALLY ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLARS, BUT EXPECTED COST OVERRUNS WILL PUT THIS SOMEWHAT HIGHER.

QUESTION: CAN THIS ACTION ON OUR PART BE TERMED "RETALIATION" FOR THE INDIGNITIES THE US HAS SUFFERED IN VIENTIANE?

ANSWER: I DON'T BELIEVE THE TERM IS AN ACCURATE REFLECTION OF THE FACTS. THE TERMINATION AND WITHDRAWAL OF OUR AID PROGRAM AT LAO REQUEST AND CONGRESSIONAL SENTIMENT AGAINST FURTHER AID TO LAOS WERE THE MAIN FACTORS IN OUR DECISION.

QUESTION: DOES THIS MEAN THAT OUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK CANNOT BE USED BY LAOS?

ANSWER: THE QUESTION DOES NOT ARISE IN THIS CASE, INASMUCH AS THIS DEALS WITH OUR BILATERAL LOAN TO LAOS. THE PROJECT IS MANAGED BUT NOT DIRECTLY FINANCED BY THE ADB.

3. WE DO NOT PLAN TO USE THE ABOVE UNTIL WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY USADB THAT ADB, LAO, AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN PROJECT HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED PER STATE 211421. KISSINGER

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